Vol. 3, No. 2. October, 1938

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CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE
P.O. Box 491, Station F
TORONTO

Canadian POETRY MAGAZINE

VOLUME 3
No. 2—OCTOBER, 1938

Published under the auspices of the
CANADIAN AUTHORS' ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 491, STATION F, TORONTO

The Canadian Poetry Magazine

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE issued under the auspices of the Canadian Authors' Association for the encouragement and development of Canadian verse.

Annual Subscription, two dollars; single copy, fifty cents.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed, if return of manuscript is desired.

Individual criticism of submitted verse cannot be undertaken by the magazine.

Address all correspondence to Canadian Poetry Magazine, Post Office Box, No. 491, Station F, Toronto, Ontario.

* * *

Notice of Awards

FINDING the summer vacation a difficult time for a literary competition, several correspondents have asked for an extension of time to work out the WHO-WROTE-IT contest announced in our last issue. We have therefore decided to publish the results in the December number. Any competitor enclosing 50 cents with the answers will receive either the June issue which contains the announcement or the December one which contains the results.

PRIZES

FOR THE JUNE NUMBER

First—*The Rivers,* F. Robina Monkman, Toronto, Ont.
Second—*Two Poems,* Anne Margaret Angus, Vancouver, B.C.

HONOURABLE MENTION

A Sea-Medley, Eric F. Gaskell, Montreal, P.Q.
Battle Harbour, Labrador, Leo Cox, Montreal, P.Q.
Surety, Clara Bernhardt, Preston, Ont.
Requiescat, Frances Ebbs-Canavan, Victoria, B.C.
Flight from Thought, Isobel Routly, Toronto, Ont.
Recall, Joyce Marshall, Toronto, Ont.

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THE Canadian Authors' Association established the Canadian Poetry Magazine to stimulate the production of fine verse in Canada. The eight issues of Volumes 1 and 2 were largely made possible through the generosity of Foundation Supporters, whose gifts supplemented the Magazine's earnings from subscriptions and advertisements.

We have proved the existence of high-grade ore, but we need your continued support to produce it. If you believe that in the highest sense we cannot nationally exist without a great poetry, you will strengthen us by your financial support. You are invited to assist by contributing to a fund for the production of Volume 3.

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W. A. Deacon, Toronto; Mrs. J. B. de Pencier, Owen Sound, Ont.; Miss Ellen M. Fulton, Little Harbour, N.S.; John Murray Gibbon, Montreal; Mrs. Douglas C. Henderson, Toronto; J. F. B. Livesay; Dr. J. Markowitz, Toronto; P. D. Ross, Ottawa; Dr. Duncan Campbell Scott; H. S. Southam, Ottawa; W. M. Southam, Ottawa; The Poetry Group of the Victoria and Islands Group of the C.A.A.

Others who have indicated their interest by making donations are: Sir Frederick G. Banting, Toronto; Dr. Beaumont S. Cornell, Fort Wayne, Indiana, U.S.A.; Miss Mary S. Edgar, Toronto; Major F. V. Longstaff, Victoria; Mrs. Lillian O'Donnell, Schumacher, Ont.; James H. Stitt, Ottawa.

J. MARKOWITZ,
Business Executive.

The Canadian Poetry MAGAZINE

VOL. 3, No. 2. OCTOBER, 1938

EDITOR: E. J. Pratt. ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AWARDS: E. K. Brown, F. O. Call, William Arthur Deacon, Pelham Edgar, R. K. Gordon, J. M. Lothian, S. Morgan-Powell, V. B. Rhodenizer, Sir Charles G. D. Roberts, G. G. Sedgewick, F. W. Tamblyn.

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THE CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE ENTERS ITS THIRD YEAR

(*A Résumé of its History, given before its Official Sponsors, the Canadian Authors' Association, at the 1938 National Convention of the C.A.A. in Ottawa, June 13, 1938*)

NATHANIEL A. BENSON, M.A.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I consider it a great honour and privilege to present to this distinguished national gathering a brief résumé of, and comment upon, the history of the *Canadian Poetry Magazine*. As its present managing editor, speaking on behalf of its editorial and executive board consisting of Editor-in-chief Dr. E. J. Pratt, Dr. Pelham Edgar, Dr. Jacob Markowitz, Dr. E. A. Hardy, and Mr. William Arthur Deacon, I feel that I occupy an enviable position in presenting the *Canadian Poetry Magazine* to its official sponsors, the members of the C.A.A. This magazine, intended to be the official voice and vehicle of Canadian Poetry, came into being in January, 1936, on the high tide of that wave of unbounded literary enthusiasm which marked the inaugural meeting of the Association of Canadian Bookmen. Special tribute must be paid to the founders of the magazine, Dr. Pelham Edgar, Mr. Albert H. Robson, Mr. Murray Gibbon, and Dr. E. J. Pratt.

The magazine is a quarterly, appearing four times a year, at regular intervals unless the editorial board feels that the cause of the magazine may be furthered by shortening or lengthening the interval between issues, as in the case of short intervals to produce an issue coincident with the Book Fairs, the visit to Toronto of His Excellency on Canadian Poetry Night in November, 1937, Christmas advertising, or the national conventions of our sponsors, the members of the C.A.A.

The *Canadian Poetry Magazine* is intended to be national in scope, affording the same privilege of expression to the traditionalist of Montreal or Halifax as the free versifier of Victoria or Nanaimo. The Editor has promoted and will continue to promote *both* causes with strict impartiality. The avowed traditionalist and the sincere radical have an equal voice within these pages, whose Editor is adopting a valiant precedent in steering a responsible *via media.* A contemporary and catholic approach to poetry is the magazine's criterion. Literary excellence is its yardstick, and neither clique, cult, nor purely regional merit can be recognized without ultimate excellence of artistry, materialization of inspiration, and a high level of artistic achievement. For nearly three years competent critics and judges across the Dominion have attested the excellence of the magazine's content. Exacting critics have admitted that, speaking in a truly national sense, the *Canadian Poetry Magazine* has taken a place heretofore unoccupied by any other publication. This is not mere ballyhoo nor unprovable publicity: in one issue (Vol. 2, No. 2) we have had one poem from every important contemporary Canadian poet, making that volume authentically anthological in character. We have had the honour of publishing *in toto* (in Vol. 2, No. 3) one of the most distinguished literary addresses ever delivered in the Dominion, that of His Excellency, Lord Tweedsmuir, "Return to Masterpieces", given on behalf of literature in general and of your own magazine in particular, in Convocation Hall,

Toronto, on the occasion of Canadian Poetry Night, November 24, 1937.

May I read to you a critic's impersonal report of that evening when a Viceroy, himself a famous English man of letters, spoke on the same platform as six of Canada's representative poets? "If we could have brought back a John Garvin or a John D. Logan to witness the crowds in Convocation Hall on Wednesday evening, November 24, he would have been amazed at the great and brilliant gathering there met in the name of Canadian poetry, and sponsored by a dignified little quarterly. The *Canadian Poetry Magazine* is probably the only periodical in the world that would attempt a platform entertainment for its subscribers, and certainly the only one which could lure a Viceroy to that platform to become the chief entertainer." That was written in December, 1937.

Nearly $800 has been paid out of our coffers to date to Canadian poets for their contributions, and no poet deserving of payment or known to be in real need of remuneration is left unpaid for his or her contribution. Because so many contributors, not needing the small payment of $2 per page, returned cheques sent to them in order to assist the cause of the magazine, the Executive discontinued the practice of paying for *all* contributions (beginning Vol. 2, No. 4) and now offers instead seven larger cash prizes per issue, totalling $50.00: $15.00 first prize, $10.00 second, and five equal prizes of $5.00 each. These prizes are voted on and awarded by an advisory board of judges, made up of one notable critic in each province who chooses individually and independently those poems in each issue which he deems worthy of prize awards.

Operating costs have been cut to a minimum commensurable with the production of a magazine worthy of this one's content. In the words of the Editor, "the *Canadian Poetry Magazine* is intended to be a national vehicle of poetic expression which aims to preserve a sane balance between tradition and experiment". That it has thoroughly espoused these causes of tra-

ditionalism is proven by the words of a vehement experimenter who denounced your magazine as "ultra-conservative". That it has conversely befriended the radicals is proven by the letter of an honoured traditionalist who sent a poem to a friend requesting that the latter "try to get 'Red Ned' to publish an inoffensive lyric". One disappointed yet persistent contributor even paid the magazine the dubious compliment of complaining in governmental circles "that there was actually a conspiracy among the editors" against publishing his panegyrics. Other noted bards claimed that, even when signed pseudononymously, their lesser and later works evoked only a *C.P.M.* rejection slip. Of such is the kingdom of poesy! But alas, it must be sadly admitted that previous performance, regional prestige, or persiflaginous approbation avail nothing before the standards of the magazine.

New features intended to improve and vary its content have been progressively introduced and maintained in the magazine. In June, 1937, special articles and essays on poetic subjects were first published; this present issue (Vol. 3, No. 1, June, 1938) contains our first authoritative Poetry Review Department as well as the "Who-Wrote-It?" contest which aims to familiarize the Canadian public with our poets' most memorable lines. This issue (June, 1938) has been published especially early that it might be available for this convention of the magazine's official sponsors.

But the final proof of any pudding is in the eating, and I, therefore, propose to conclude my remarks by reading to you a few short selections representative of the best poetry in our nine issues to date. (Extracts from the following poems were listed for reading:

Vol. 1, No. 1, Jan., 1936—"Penelophon" by Audrey A. Brown
" 1, " 2, April, 1936—"Hymn to the Spirit Eternal" by George Herbert Clarke
" 1, " 3, July, 1936—"The Clam Digger" by Ellen Fulton
" 1, " 4, March, 1937—"I Might Forget" by Anne Marriott

Vol. 2, No. 1, June, 1937—"Who is Pan?" by Lloyd Roberts
" 2, " 2, Oct., 1937—"A Song of the Admirals" by Robina Monkman
" 2, " 3, Dec., 1937—"Wheat and Barley" by Annie Charlotte Dalton
" 2, " 4, April, 1938—"Old Timer" by Ivan Mackintosh
" 3, " 1, June, 1938—"Battle Harbour" by Leo Cox

The Resolutions' Committee of the Canadian Authors' Association in convention at Ottawa adopted the following resolution on June 14, 1938:

"Whereas in the opinion of this Branch (British Columbia, Vancouver and Mainland) Dr. E. J. Pratt and those associated with him have rendered valuable service to the C.A.A. and to Canadian letters in the successful publication of two volumes (eight issues) of the *Canadian Poetry Magazine,*

Be It Resolved, that the National Executive be requested to convey to Dr. Pratt and his associates the thanks and congratulations of the Canadian Authors' Association."

TWEEDSMUIR AWARD ANNOUNCED

A poignant moment in the convention proceedings was observed at the evening session when Mr. Barnard, who was in the chair, referred to the recent passing of our distinguished poet-member, Mrs. Annie Charlotte Dalton, O.B.E., of Vancouver, in her 73rd year. This brilliant and courageous woman had brought honour to the writing profession in her adopted country, Canada; and the Dalton home in Vancouver had for years been a rendezvous for the ablest literary minds in the Dominion.

It was with particular pleasure, Mr. Barnard said, that he was able to announce that the Tweedsmuir Medal for the best poem appearing in the *Canadian Poetry Magazine* for 1937 had been awarded posthumously to Mrs. Dalton, for her poem entitled "Wheat and Barley". Her husband, William Dalton, had come from Vancouver to receive the medal in her behalf.

Introduced to the audience by Mr. Barnard, Mr. Dalton gave a short address in which he discussed, with a wealth of interesting detail and biographical anecdotes, his late wife's literary career. He told of her unfailing sense of humour in the face of serious physical handicaps, her marvellous genius for making and retaining friends, her skill as an artist in the related medium of painting, and the varied aspects of her other interests. She was made a member of the Order of the British Empire in 1935, in recognition of her work. Mr. Dalton read selections from her poems, to illustrate her diversified gifts and variety of interests.

CECIL FRANCIS LLOYD: 1884-1938

Charles Clay

CECIL FRANCIS LLOYD, Winnipeg poet and essayist, author of several books[1] of superlatively good verse, sometime contributor to the *Canadian Poetry Magazine,* is dead. And Canada has heedlessly lost a singer whose voice was remarkably mellow and remarkably true. He was an astonishing combination of romanticist and classicist, an unexpected amalgam which he carried off with considerable poetic verve.

Lloyd, of course, never claimed to be a Canadian writer. He said he was an Englishman, and wanted to be known merely as an Englishman writing in Canada. But he cannot escape Canadianism: in his quarter of a century of residence in the Red River Valley he sent down roots that drew up Canadian spiritual nourishment—nourishment, which, reflected constantly in his style and often in his content, makes him unalterably a part of Canadian Literature. Canada claims him—and will belatedly acknowledge his genius.

That this recognition will be thus belated is, no doubt, partly due to the peculiarity of his poetic inspiration, to that strange synthesis of romanticism and classicism that Lloyd expressed in his poems. In one of his inimitable letters he confessed the difficulty of keeping "close to the old, gentle, simple, eternal things": in his Preface to *Landfall* he wrote, "a poem should have two kinds of beauty, beauty of thought and beauty of form". These two elements—mellowness of tone and trueness of note—sought birth in Lloyd's poetic music: and, as he said in "The Poet",[2] one could see from

> The limpid music of his homely verse

his frequent

---

[1] *Leaves of the Sibyl* (Toronto, Hunter Rose, 1928); *Rosemary and Rue* (Winnipeg, Stovel, 1929); *Vesper Bells* (Toronto, Hunter Rose, 1929); *Landfall* (*Collected Poems*) (Toronto, Ryerson, 1935).

[2] All quotations are from *Landfall.*

> Glance of discernment flash out suddenly
> Upon the little world.

This strange dual approach to life at first baffles: it seems to be more than a clash of ideas, it seems to end in negation. But not so. It was Lloyd's genius to make romanticism and classicism more than compatible. He made them work for a common end—insight into, and understanding of, life. In one breath he could record the common things he would miss ("Earth Bound"):

> The drift of grey rain o'er summer fields,
> Voices of children, flowers and love's fierce kiss,
> And all the beauty bounteous autumn yields.

In another breath he could chart guidance for lesser minds ("The Girl in the Store"):

> . . . I understood
> Why just to see some faces is pure gain;
> Through them we touch the race that yet may be.

In one gentle brooding melancholy poem he could evoke, with warmth and intimacy, the universal elements of life ("An Old Woman Dying in Her Sleep"):

> The old clock ticks, as old clocks will;
> The heart and the wrinkled hands are still.

In another unforgettable sonnet he could marshall the shades of the higher poetic figures, and send them marching into eternity carrying the universal elements of beauty ("Helen"):

> . . . then travellers in distant lands
> Caught in the sunset's splendor or the rose
> Of dawn, a hint that only memory gives:
> Again they saw the cool uplifted hands
> Hover above the brow's divine repose,
> And with a sudden thrill cried, Helen lives.

These illustrations reveal the complexity of Lloyd's poetic genius: they suggest reasons for the tardiness of public recognition of his work. But that recognition will come. His merit

is insistent; it will ultimately crash the gates to Canadian literary immortality. When that moment arrives, there will come with it appreciation of Lloyd's own estimate of himself ("Duality"):

> But should I lay aside this mortal vesture,
> Become immortal mind,
> Then I, perhaps, may call a star my brother,
> And the great winds my kind.

THESE SHALL PERSIST

Whether I wake on earth,
    Or the earth wakes over me,
Bringing flower and fruit to birth
    After I cease to be,
Courage shall hold its worth,
    Truth shall make men free
Whether I sleep upon the earth
    Or the earth sleeps over me.

Whether I tread the grass
    Or the blades are green above,
Beauty from earth shall never pass
    Nor Joy from the eyes of love;
Peace to the heart that grieves,
    To the toiler victory,
Whether I tread the drifting leaves
    Or the leaves drift over me.

Ethelwyn Wetherald

THE LOVER IN THE SUBWAY

Builded of stone and steel they stand, the pride of our puny age;
Inlaid with granite and iron they run, the roads of our hurrying rage;
Arrogant cliffs of wonder and arroyos lamped with flame,—
But each at the breath of Time shall vanish the way it came.

Bridges across dark waters, tunnels beneath the earth,
These shall be swept away as though they had known no birth
And the roofs and the windowed walls melt down to the waiting dust
And the turrets of stone be tumbled and the glories of steel be rust.

Cobwebs and gossamer they, for Tomorrow to brush aside
Where the eagle has built her nest in our pinnacled lofts of pride,
And the serpent along the street-curb and the grass in the empty square
Shall give scant thought to the glory lost hands once fashioned there.

Yet out of their ruinous dust one thing shall triumph, My Own,
And that is our love, our deathless love, surviving their metal and stone;
Though cities go out like candles, though rivers dry up like dew,
The song of the stars shall be my unaltering ache for You.

But, here in the Subway murk, where the flailing wheels strike fire,
I wonder if men loved women in the time-lost streets of Tyre,
If a breast as soft as your breast and a heart as light with trust
Can sleep, but a drift of dust now, under Cydonia's dust?

Arthur Stringer

IMMORTAL

I keep my dearest memories green with showers:
    My thoughts fall on them constantly, like rain.
They shall not die nor wither with the hours:
    They were and are and they will be again.

Time cannot filch from me mine ancient pleasures:
    They grow but greener as the years slip by,
I am a miser adding to his treasures
    New words of love, new canvasses of sky.

Tonight my old dreams walked a while beside me,
    Their beauty unimpaired from Time's arrears;
Nor was one splendid joy of life denied me
    That I had known in love and other years.

I will then keep my dearest memories green,
    Nor shall the eons frustrate my endeavour.
I am not all that I have ever been;
    But all that I would hold is mine forever.

Wilson MacDonald

ELEGY IN SPRING

You, my friend, who are dead and will never awaken,
Blind to this wave of wonder that is spring
I will keep watch for you who have forsaken
This lovely earth—give me your songs to sing!

For I will sing of your raptures, and voice your gladness
That winter is gone and the bitter April days
And sorrow put by for a season and stilled is sadness
And the glory of heaven has come to the blossoming sprays.

Green of the grass, soft air, and a haze of light,
All that is lovely in life come round again
And the warmth of Avalon blessing the noon and night
And even a gentle glory in the rain.

Now in this moment immortal with beauty awaking
Beauty, the phoenix who mounts from the season's pyre
When young leaf buds and a world of blossoms are breaking
Forth into sight in a fragrant and matchless fire.

Now that I live and look back with a heart of wonder
On a score and a half of springs that have come and gone,
Behind the floating cloud I sense the thunder
And the shadow of years falls on the sunniest lawn.

So I shall sing of the earth and her bridal of spring,
Of beauty the blossom born in the human heart,
For man, the alien, and the unenduring
Who plays in this lovely scene the exile, the stranger's part.

Nathaniel A. Benson

SONNET FOR MILITANT MORALISTS

GOD, who at sundry times, in divers manners
Spake unto men, and was by men bespoken
To bless a quarrelling multitude of banners,
To break the proud, and pulverize the broken,
GOD, by whatever name we think to name Him
For hallowing heroes when our mood is martial,
Whether we seek to claim, or to disclaim Him,
Remains most imperturbably impartial.
We deem Him set above our clouds and clamour,
Judge of Mankind, in Majesty resplendent,
Speaking clear truth through our disordered stammer—
But will He find for plaintiff, or defendant?
We cannot answer; yet we think it odd
Our preference should bear no weight with GOD.

L. A. MacKay

SONG OF THE PRAIRIE PLOUGHMAN

Old wind, brown wind, wind of the weary Lent,
Blow wind! Rave wind!
Roll up your legions of dust, old wind,
And scream to your heart's content.
I have built my home on the fields of earth;
It is mine by the right of the plough,
And nothing—you hear me, old maker of mirth!
And nothing can frighten me now.

Old wind, brown wind, wind you are long and late.
Blow wind! Rave wind!
Roll up your legions of dust, old wind;

The sowing and I can wait.
In the lonely gloam of my empty mill
I have heard you, you mock and you jeer.
But some day, old wind, you'll have whistled your fill,
And I and my plough will be here.

SONG OF THE SOWER

I sowed my wide, black, fallowed field
Under the promise of rain.
Late and long I prayed and appealed,
But the gates of the sky were closed and sealed,
And they told me I laboured in vain.

Could I rest when my fields were burnt and bare?
The gales were shaken with mirth!
They told me God had forgotten to care;
He sent me clouds; there was no rain there.
My tears had watered the earth!

But the winds forgot their jest one night
And hovered on silent wings.
The voice of a thunder out of the height
Murmured over the parched earth's plight,
And pitied my poor dried wings.

Anthem

I lift my face where the dawn is strong,
My face that with tears was stained.
I have sung to my God a most glorious song;
My acres shall stand with a populous throng,
For to-night—oh, to-night it has rained!

Fred E. Laight

THE IMPERTINENCE OF AIRPLANES

When age on changing age had worked its will
Upon primeval slime, the world, the wave,
And slow-evolving Man in wonder, lithe,
Trod with a firming step upon the land,
The mountains were there—
But they paid no attention,
Wrapped in the grandeur of their own aloofness.

Rain, snow, hail fell on their heights—
They remained unmoved;
Rivers dashed themselves to foam
Down their precipitous sides—
It was all one to the mountains.

Little Man crawled patiently up their flanks,
Pitting his puny strength
Against their altitude,
And was ignored—
They heeded him less than gnats!

Now, airplanes come zooming noisily along
Like gigantic metallic insects
From some distant fantastic planet enormously populated,
Disturbing the slumber of centuries,
Diving, soaring, banking,
Snooping around inquisitively;
Buzzing over the backs,
Impertinently peering into the backyards
Of the mountains;
Disrespectfully looping the loop,
With saucy, upturned drake-tails,
Right over their august heads—
All but putting out of joint
The nose of the Sleeping Beauty.

Truly, one trembles
Lest the mountains stir in their sleep,
Groan,
Waken,
Rise in wrath and pour themselves into the sea—
Demolishing in their rage
Slime, the precursor of Man,
Man, the inventor of airplanes,
And airplanes,
The purveyors of impertinence.

THE SELKIRKER

From the fast-fading picture of the past,
Wind-bronzed and moccasined, he stands out clear
Sashed with a splash of crimson.
The delicate deer and thick-necked buffalo
Lent him his sturdy raiment, on his breast
A blaze of brazen buttons glittering bright
To salve the savage in his ancestry.

No stream-lined motor multiplied his time,
Increased his cares,
Nor robbed his lusty lungs of oxygen;
Wolf-cousined dogs and ox-trains screeching wild
Upon his footsteps waited leisurely.

His flowing hair unshorn as Samson's ere
Delilah's wiles betrayed him to her shears
Fell shoulder long—a primitive chevelure.

Daring the gelid jealousy of frost
He went his way beside the flexuous Red
In confidence, and placed no faltering step
Upon the prairie sod that brought him meat.

Wild were his days and wilding were his ways
And yet nobility was in his mien—
Strong as the wind,
Beneficent as rain,
Hospitable as sun,
Marooned on his mid-continental isle
And girt about with hungry wilderness.

Clara Hopper

THE SLEEPING GIANT OF THUNDER BAY

(A Legend of the Ojibways)

Deep rose and purples flush the clouds of evening,
Pale greens and gold transform the greys of dawn,
Storms rage and die upon the Big-Sea-Water . . .
Yet weary Nanna-Bijou still sleeps on!

Grown weary with much labour for his people
On plain and river o'er his prospering land,
Prone, now, he rests . . . upon his mist-veiled mountain.
None wakes his sleep. It is his stern command.

But Kabin sears the maize-fields bright in tassel;
Shadwana dries the creeks, the wild-rice dies;
All meatless come the braves that stalk the bison;
Their squaws moan when the hungry papoose cries.

"Oh, who will dare to wake The Sleeping Giant
Who slumbers on, all careless of our need?" . . .
"Kind to his children is the great-heart Spirit!" . . .
"If he is angered, we shall die indeed!" . . .

Up spoke a daring hunter, gaunt with famine,
"My squaw, my sons like withered leaves lie dead . . .!"
He scaled the rock . . . he pierced the sacred silence . . .
He begged of Nanna-Bijou, meat and bread!

Oh, mighty was the wakened Giant's anger!
"Invade my haunt—you suffer! "Come, my slaves!
Come, Thunder Birds of Mount Mackay, and slay him!
Strike terror in all disobedient knaves!"

Black grew the sky as his death-dealing passion!
His thunders roared . . . and echoed far away!
From island shores to inland crags they muttered—
Echoed, and roared, and muttered—night and day! . . .

Then clear and peaceful lay the hill-girt basin.
But always, still, men call it THUNDER BAY!

Nanna-Bijou: A Great Spirit, in power second only to Manitou.
The Big-Sea-Water: Lake Superior.
Kabin: The West Wind.
Shadwana: The South Wind.

Ada M. Strachan

BY THE SEA

What came up out of that deadly sea
Was not weed nor wind nor wave to me;
Moaning all day on the white wet sand,
One moment sea and one moment land,
Went the shadows that rocked and swayed
Till the bright wave dimmed and the red west greyed.

There were fingers that took the foam
And let it fall like hair from a comb,
There were feet that couched on the billow
Listlessly as a head on a pillow,
There were eyes that rose from the crest
Looking east and south and west.

And those stark shadows on sand and sea—
I wanted them so to speak to me!
But all that came from the endless round
Above the mutinous deep-sea sound,
While the wave went dim and the west went grey,
Was: "Nothing — nothing — nothing to say."

Mary Cornell

ONLY THE ROSES KNOW

Long, long ago, in a garden old,
I gathered a rose of crimson hue,
And whispered into its heart of gold
The thorny grief that my own heart knew!

The fleeting years with touch benign
From my aching heart the thorn withdrew;
Then softly dropping her oil and wine
Oblivion covered the wound anew.

I came again to the garden old
Where the queenly roses in beauty grew;
I gathered one with a heart of gold,
Heavy with sweetness and wet with dew.

Came a sudden pang of vain regret,
And I wept for the grief of long ago!
But the night wind murmured—*"Forget, forget*
The sorrow that only the roses know!"

Helen Fairbairn

THE HOMESTEAD

Unsown, unreaped, of care bereft,
Clear-etched against a windless dawn,
I see the homestead that you left
When rain forsook Saskatchewan.

The empty windows of your home,
Like eyeless sockets, blindly stare
At twisted lines of furrowed loam
The winds have turned with their keen share.

Your acres are the burial ground
Where all your plans and hopes lie dead,
While Russian thistles blow around
The broken pump and sagging shed.

In spring, anemones again
Will bloom upon the prairie's breast,
And in the lonely, grass-grown lane
The meadow lark will build her nest.

The sun will shine, though you have gone,
On budding shrub and flaunting weed.
Naught but the land you walked upon
And loved, will your departure heed.

Elizabeth Garbutt

GOVERNMENT BACKBENCHER

The Bencher sits behind the Cabinet,
Soon rates it as a gilded martinet;
He is the lash the Whip snaps at the foe,
He is a Yes-Man and a No.

He dozes quite quiescent in debates
Although the rowdy tumult stimulates,
And only when the Speaker takes a vote
He opens up his brassy throat.

He mutely does the things his leaders rant,
A placid fish-retrieving cormorant,
And gives his democratic "ayes" or "nayes"
In purely philosophic ways.

REFORMERS

Reformers are no timid souls,
Their brains are lined with brass;
They set their minds on distant goals
That rarely come to pass:
And though they play heroic roles,
Brave Daniels in grim lions' holes,
And though their dreams are wrecked on shoals,
They are a blissful class.

Reformers, then, are happy quite,
Until someone, for fun,
Asks: "Are you sure that you are right
In what you've just begun?"
The question brings a sea-green blight,
And Left they cannot tell from Right,
And caught in this unnatural plight,
Reforming circles run!

Charles Clay

TO A DOMESTIC GODDESS

Not the Least of Our Lares and Penates

Upon the fender stool you lie
Controlled affection in your eye—
    A cosy Sphinx
    You little minx—
    Withdrawn, complete,
    Compact and neat;
Do you despise the human race,
You subtle cat with velvet grace?

Evasion of our question crude—
You are too clever to be rude?
    Or,—is it this,
    Since Œdipus
    Your riddle guessed,
    Is silence best?
No sound from diplomatic fur
Save the deep wisdom of her purr.

Marie L. McPhillips

SICK GIRL

The laughter of another girl
Floats through the open door,
And suddenly my little room
Is smaller than before.

Oh, strange that I can bear the pain,
Though often it is bad,
But weep because another girl
Is passing with a lad.

Helen Fitzgerald Dougher

TUNER AND TUNE

Pain in my heart,
and pain in the bare dark trees;
pain in the night,
and the wind,
and the complaining sea!

Another,
hearing the brittle branches' speech,
remembers spring;
encompassed by the night,
anticipates the dawn;
battling the bitter wind,
dreams of the summer breeze;
and in the plaint of the restless sea,
is conscious only of its latent power.

Why is my ear attuned
so differently from his?
Because of the pain in my heart?

Irene H. Moody

FILM OF THOUGHT

More hushed than sleep, a climbing rose
Mounts year by year the porticos
Of this lone lodge, and harebells toss
In foam along the mountain moss—
Blue foam, that asks no man to share
The birth of beauty breaking there.

With tasselled growth the hill designs
A terrace blending gorse and vines,
Nor bargains for a lichened lane
Where birds may carol after rain,
Nor questions what the seasons bring . . .
A hill is deaf to reckoning.

Fruitful as Spring by no words caught
Is progress to hands whose hour is brief;
And through a film of patient thought
Desire will echo that belief.

Jessie Playfair Bickford

SPRING MAGIC

Spring magic always comes on wings of song
Plucked from the heart-strings of an April day,
When flower-jewels, laid away so long,
Adorn the earth once more, and green leaves sway
To rhythm of bird-serenades that rise
In silvery ripples, filling all the land
With melodies of love. Our eager eyes
Behold Daffodil April's lovely hand
Join sun and rain in games of hide-and-seek,
Or clasp a dewdrop necklace on the lawn.
Wind-voices hum a lullaby, then speak
Such gay commands that soon the hats are gone
Pirouetting down the street, and people race
And chase, while April smiles and sets the pace.

Amy Bissett England

BREAD FOR WINGS

Come to my window sill,
Take your fill
Of the bread I fling;
So I, who am wingless,
May feed the strength of your wing;
So I, who am dumb,
May through you sing;
Come, eat of the crumbs I cast,
So I be known at last
Of the stars' far shine,
And the way of the wind
Be a way of mine;
Eat, so I rule with a careless ease
The heights of hills or the heights of trees;

Eat, so I race with a reckless grace
The soundless void of an endless space;
Come eat of my crust, so that I
Shall be free of your flying;
So my throat shall be no more hurt
With the ache of the still songs' crying;
Come eat of my bread so I be
Of the wingèd heart,
And my song lift the wings of me.

DESOLATION

You speak of strange, eternal truths
  Beyond this mortal pain,
But naught of faith may penetrate
  The dullness of my brain.

I cannot raise my vision up
  To your prophetic skies;
God knows how close her face has been
  These nights before my eyes!

I cannot hear a word you say
  Of great or commonplace,
And howsoe'er I look for God,
  I only see her face.

Because He show'd Himself in her,
  It's very hard to see
How, having taken her away,
  He could abide with me.

R. H. Grenville

RETURN

I shall return to the sweet down creeping slowly,
Belted with buttercups and buckled with daisies white,
Where the night-mists sleep, and the air is bright and holy,
And fragrance and thrush-song are the warp and woof of the
    Night.

I shall return to the slow sea, throbbing and throbbing
In heart-beat rhythm upon the low grey stones,
Where Silence is snapped by the gull on the dark wave bobbing,
And the faithful tides surrender the old ships' bones!

I shall return to the pine-treed hill and the motion
Of quiet boughs spreading like fingers against the sky,
I shall return to the seethe and the whine of the ocean
Brooched with the starlight, and the moon,—when the moon
    is high!

Pauline Havard

RESURGAM

When wrapped in earth I lie apart,
The sweet white roots will find my heart,
And, by their silent alchemy,
Transform me into plant, or tree;
To breathe again; to taste the bliss
Of wind and rain and dawn's first kiss;
To share the God-born energy
Of singing star and throbbing sea;
Assured that Winter's blasts but bring
The thousand ecstacies of Spring.

Mary B. Huber

INGRATE

Retract your favour, gods,
Who outdoled quietude;
Return the pain that prods,
The fire of spirit feud.

Wring from this marble brow
Familiar sweat of blood;
Plunge deep your forward prow
Into the mind's back flood.

Rip open wounds long-healed
With Memory's barbed knife;
Furrow the heart's plane field
Deep for the tares of life.

I perish in this peace,
My frustrate being longs
To dance at Fate's caprice
And leap to snarl of thongs.

Gordon LeClaire

DEATH OF A STRANGER

We set the stage:
A roadside eating-house,
Fly-specked menu-cards
On smeary varnished tables,
Dusty pyramids of doughnuts
Their brown dejection flanked
By wilted pies;
Cigarettes and candy bars for sale
Beneath the simpering blonde
On last year's calendar—
As though time itself, for very boredom
Refused to shuffle on—
Jenny, copper-haired
In overall of doubtful green,
A gladiolus in a dingy sheath,
Rubs the tables with a soapy rag
Glancing now at autumn's first
Determined rain—streaking the dusty panes,
Sending muddy rivulets
All down the sun-baked paths,
Teasing with rough fingers
The petunias' velvet skirts—
Now at her sole customers,
A pallid well-dressed man
Whose soft fat overflows his chair,
And his well-groomed lady friend.
Too well-groomed—
Eyebrows closely plucked,
Hair too black, too sleekly brushed,
Make-up too perfect,
Finger-nails blood-red.
Jenny wipes the cruets,
Her thoughts are birds,
Hollow-boned, swift, imprisoned.

JENNY

Gee, the old man's sure
to close up soon . . . this rain
means the season's over . . .
Jim will miss his cup of coffee here.
He hadn't ought to be driving a truck,
a clever boy like him . . .
But I don't want to marry anyone . . .
Love . . . THEY loved each other . . .

A small girl running home at dusk,
sweetness of linden blossoms on the boulevard,
and purple lilac by the creaking gate;
Starchy rustle of brief frock and petticoat,
squeaky pit-a-pat of bright new shoes
on the loose board walk,
strains of "Tipperary" from the gramophone next door;
A single star at the top of the tallest tree;
The dim hot hall with its familiar smell
of new-baked bread and old tobacco smoke;
The huge door-knob, hard, cold,
and slithery to the palm;
A pool of red light on the oilcloth floor;
A shrill voice . . . a breathless hush . . .
Silence shattered by that shot,
that tearing echoing scream
that pursues all down the corridors of night . . .

A girl must keep herself to herself
and always walk in the light;
never creep upstairs in the dusk,
or linger for a kiss,
because there's Something,
Something unceasingly patient
waiting, lurking in the shadow . . .

Here's Jim now . . .
The khaki uniform
becomes his slenderness,
Makes him look taller than he is.
How worn he looks, fine drawn.
What panther stalks his wiry mind?
Gee, I'm fanciful today.

JIM

Hi Toots!
Mug o'tar an' two hunks of lead.
Babe, you're a sight to rest the eyes
of a guy who's been pushing all night
in the smoke! Pretty day, ain't it?
How's about a kiss for your old man?
No? O.K. by me . . .

Now, why do I talk like this?
Its because I'm afraid,
afraid of myself, afraid of my thoughts,
my memories . . .
I hide behind a barrage of words,
the rough coarse talk of Jim, truck-driver,
that no one, not even myself,
may ever again see
that white-livered cur
James Nathan Donovan, engineer.
Jim at least risks no life but his own,
while James N.D., the dog . . .
A failure . . . My God!
Broken at thirty.
No wonder Jen will have nothing to do with me,
there is the odour of death upon me,

and she, simple child,
follows a wholesome instinct
rejecting my advances.
Jim risks no life but his own . . .
But does he?
No deadheads of course,
but chicken-brained pedestrians
or a fool boy on a bike,
smoke, a greasy road,
a sudden shimmy,
hand a thought too slow
upon the anchor . . . then what?

My God! these fears are rats
that gnaw the pillars of the mind
until some day the whole damn edifice
will topple, come thundering to the ground,
crushing the rats;
Jim and James be both forgotten,
lost in smothering, rainbow dust.

Thanks, Sunset Babe.
What about signing a contract
to make my coffee every day?
No? Well can't say I blame you,
nothing much in it for you.

Strange how clear-sighted
the simple-hearted are.
Instinctively she feels a want and weakness in me . . .
lack of vitality . . . the will to fail?
If she loved me my love should reject her
unless it too is tainted.
Oh, quit these introspective vapours,

in James Nathan Donovan
they might be forgiven,
but in Jim, truck-driver,
they are simply comic,
patently absurd . . .
That adorable red head . . .
to see it on the pillow beside me,
thin lids covering those smoky eyes;
to taste that mouth,
feel those sweet limbs relaxed
against my limbs, lean, muscled, hard . . .
Come, pull yourself together,
observe that fat amorous slug
and his moll. What rats of fear
gnaw the foundations of his mind?
None, no doubt. Why should they?
He is assured, obviously successful
in business and what in his cosmos
passes for love.

CROYDEN,
THE BUSINESS MAN

Why am I here?
What has this painted poll-parrot
to do with me?
With the essential me that knows
you cannot cheat loneliness
nor outstrip death?
A dreary place . . . terrible food . . .
Fine young fellow, that truck-driver,
so obviously in love.
Fear could find no hand-hold
on the smooth hard surface of his mind . . .
And his sweetheart,

young, wholesome-hued as a ripe apple . . .
What would happen if, as in some old legend,
I could offer them my wealth,
take in exchange their youth,
the years that still are theirs, the hopes . . .
Escape the bat-infested caverns of my mind,
plunge into the fierce young light of his,
the love-illumined calm of hers.
Death . . . it is a fearful word,
a fearful thing . . .
A thing certain to come to every man . . .
Aye, but to some unawares,
gently, in sleep . . .
or with a sudden tiger-leap
to one who knows not he is stalked . . .
to others in the lust of battle . . .
to many as a blessed anodyne
and sweet release from pain . . .
while I wait, clear-sighted
and watch death slowly smother
my little day in night.
"The grave's a fine and private place
but none I think do there embrace . . ."
"But in that sleep of death what dreams may come?"
"Marley was dead, dead as a door nail,
though why a door nail, a coffin nail
one would think . . ."
"Oh, its quiet down there . . ."
"Still as the grave . . ."

My God! What are you dreaming of, Ianthe?
Why don't you speak,
say something, anything, not sit there mum
and glum as a death's head at a feast . . .
Isn't there a radio in this place?

Hey, waitress, turn the radio on,
let's have some music,
something loud and gay,
this infernal place is as cheery as a tomb . . .

IANTHE

Why this outburst? Is he too afraid?
Yet, how could poverty touch him . . .
Was Donnaconda a mistake?
Mining stock is always a gamble,
and the things they call "safe"
so desperately slow.
So slow and age so swift . . .
I doubt if that new cream, for all it's touted so,
is any better than the last I tried . . .
To think of the glowing beauty
wasted on that common waitress
and her doltish lover . . .
They say that Maurice has a treatment
definitely new, something to do with the glands,
that works wonders . . .

Croyden, did you ever, when you were a lad
go to the seashore for a holiday
and stand upon a glistening rock
waving your sand-shovel
and defying the tide with shouts of laughter,
"This is a magic rock
the waves cannot touch it!"
Then leap to another,
just as the waters covered the first,
"This is a magic rock for sure,
forever and ever!"
Almost believing it
till the cold wet fingers of the tide
touched your shrinking feet?

CROYDEN

Now, what made you say that?

Terror hung between them,
a naked blade and a crystal bell . . .

A flux of autumn air, rain borne,
and in the doorway stood an aged man
his thin drenched garments
clinging to his frame like seaweed to a post.
Dripping hat in hand
he spoke without humility,
"May I come in, Miss, and sit awhile?"
Incongruous portent for an instant
Filled the room. Jim's voice restored the commonplace
as slapping a coin on the counter,
"Sure, Dad, come on in", he cried,
"Give him a mug-up, Jen, on me."
"You are very kind . . ."

As in the pre-determined motions of a play
the old man closed the door
and staggered to a table in the centre of the stage.
The water from his sodden garments
made little pools on the floor.
In silence the other actors watched him
each suddenly conscious that all his previous life
had been but a prelude to this breathless moment
suspended, a luminous entity,
between the past and the future,
this stranger's entrance the catalyst
that should fix the shape of things to come.

With sure rehearsed speech and movement
each takes his part.
Now Jenny puts the cup of coffee down
beside him. "Thank you, Miss."
She lingers, impelled to speak:
"Have you far to go?"
"No. I've come
a long way, but I'm near the end of my tramp."

JENNY

Have you friends to meet you there?

I never saw a man so thin,
the fine skin is stretched upon his bones
like paper on a lantern frame.
He is not afraid of the dark stairway
because he has light in himself.
Is love a light? And is the choice
to quench it and creep forever in the dark
or to start the climb with only one step clear?

STRANGER

Yes, friends to meet me there . . .
all those I dared to love.
Are you promised to the lad
whose eyes follow you with so much shy affection?

With the question Jim is drawn
into the potent circle.

JIM

Strange old man . . . a failure
by any standard you can name,
yet that hoar head held high
speaks not defeat.

Failure is a hard nut . . .
what and if one cracked that nut
and found the kernel sound
and buried it . . . what tree
bearing what sweet fruit, might spring?

To Jenny, standing all confused
tray still in hand, the question is repeated,

STRANGER
Tell me, are you promised?

She turns the radio low, and in a whisper,
eyes on Jim, cheeks afire, replies
"Not yet".

Warm courage rides the wave
that floods the senses with delight
as dear acquaintances embrace,
fears vanish like the sand mounds
that children build, before the morning's tide.

Ianthe, too well-groomed,
cheeks enamelled as a doll's,
is drawn by the strong thin cord
of her thoughts and nagging fears
into the drama played about the stranger
whose part in their own play
the lovers have already begun to forget.

IANTHE
Fed by grace of that lout's charity,
cold, wet, destitute in his old age,
yet his eyes, as he spoke to the girl
were clear and candid as a boy's.
In his voice that asked an alms
and then gave thanks, was no bitter note.

The aged poor living on sufferance
dependent on a grudging dole
from tables of the young,
should cringe, cumberers of the earth . . .
Unless there lie, hid beneath the ash
of life some spark that, fanned to flame
by the night wind, makes a circle
of warm light, vanquishing the very darkness
that gave it birth.
Then age and poverty
are powerless, irrelevant, and I,
fear's prisoner, chained to a mirage.

Croyden, that poor old man
has not touched his coffee yet.

CROYDEN

No.
There is something odd about him,
an unnatural stillness in the way he sits;
stay here while I investigate.

Not more than half a dozen steps
in this drab room,
and yet I feel constrained,
as though this were a place, an hour of destiny,
and this aged pauper charged
with some word of vital meaning
potent to change the current of my life
and make of me another man.
A word I long, and yet so dread to hear
that like the worthies of an elder time
my bowels turn to water.
Ah, I come
too late. If he had anything to say
to me it is forever lost. He has taken the secret with him.

In a moment the others will perceive
that death is here; they will crowd about
and exclaim; there will be police, an inquest.
But this destitute old man, escaped
beyond us all, will not lose the peace,
the power, with which in death
he has defeated death; by his exit
leaving me, his heir by seeming chance,
a portion of his fearless dignity.

If then that for which I wait
be thus vulnerable, invulnerable I;
and death but a forward step
in the orderly progression that began
in the loins of lovers long forgot,
and must endure until tyrannic time
forspent, yield death at last
to be swallowed up in victory.

Ianthe, the poor old chap is dead . . .

IANTHE

I thought as much. Yet he was not poor,
for he has left me rich.

CROYDEN

You too?

The moment hung between them,
Iridescent . . .
An enigmatic smile
curved the dead man's lips,
his blank eyes gazed in infinite surprise . . .
So let the curtain fall.

Mary Elizabeth Colman

Warmth-flushed, fire-satiated, he reaches for the dials;
And suddenly they beat about his walls,
The invisible wings,
White birds of shattered silence fluttering,
Trapped by cruel candour of the silver wires,
Crying, crying,
We do not care what grief we bring your house
So long as it be news.

The High Commissioner
Declares that martial law holds Palestine.
Pale Christ is lost
Somewhere among the blasted orange-trees
That skirt Valencia.
(A traveller there has seen them with his eyes,
A monk's hands piercing through the dust,
White bones that will not loose their rosary,
The blade that cut them glittering in the grass.)
The room is filled with marching feet of time,
And yellow faces float on tides of dusk,
Upturned and bloated in the hideous gloom.
He starts, half frightened by the fire—
The lights of cities burning looks like this.

She comes and sits beside him, tidy-haired.
The clicking of her heels, the teacup-clatter
Drown out the rising beat of wings,
Relentless words that glance against his soul,
And hold him listening beyond his will.
Perhaps you will have better luck tomorrow,
Let's listen to the radio tonight.

Above her voice the crying mounts again,
Let us in, let us in,

We will ease this inward pressure that unmans you,
Drive foolish hope away from you forever,
Tomorrow will not matter any more.
He feels hot anger mounting in his veins,
And goes to see that all the doors are shut.
There is no welcome here, he thinks.
No idol of the ignorant of life,
No penny-brained dictator
Shall tell me what to eat from them, my plates,
Shall entertain me with destruction of tomorrow . . .
You don't have to buy a licence on direct relief . . .
God, I'm tired tonight.
The news flashes are over.

Sara Jean McKay

SEANCE

This ghost is much embarrassed that his son,
    Coached in a gentler way of thought and speech,
Should still consider where the mackerel run
    And three grey fish-huts on a windy beach.
Embarrassed but unsurprised. His heart has known
    That kinship tempered in an offshore blow—
More eloquent than blood to mark its own—
    Pulsed wordless in us. And he knows I know.

Lord, I address myself to you: be kind,
    Thoughtful of how the cosmic current sets.
Though immortality is a state of mind,
    Let there be sandy bottom for the nets.
When it is time for this quick flesh to die
    Let herring school through heaven's hot July.

Charles Bruce

RELENTLESS NIGHT

We draw the sheltering curtains close
And stir the fire to make it bright:
With cheerful masks of commonplace
We hide our faces from the night.

We know that—surging silently—
Cruel against our window bars
Batter the infinite waves of dark,
Shatter innumerable stars.

WHERE ARE YOU?

I falter on the verge of that dark wood, your sorrow:
I hurry through the fringes of the silent wood;
What is this stillness?
Despair, or silence full of soundless screaming,
Or is it peace?
Perhaps in the wood's deep heart your candle's burning
Upon some altar:
My candle has gone out, though no breath touched it.
I am afraid!
Now sleep, like mist, drifts round me. Running, running—
As in a dream—
I seek you nightlong in the thickets of your grief.

Anne Margaret Angus

BRIEF PARADISE

All had gone with him,
The light,—the music
And the magic of the night;
For but a moment more
Could he be with me,
To flash some consolation from that shore,
Fog-girt, beyond the bounds of human sight,
Which sadly sunders us
And leaves but anguish of uncertainty.

Dorothy Sproule

SONNET

(*Inspired by a Rock in the Glacial Garden at Lucerne, Switzerland*)

Before the ancients carved in hieroglyph
Their early scenes of human history,
This rock, like some vast shapen hippogriff,
Stood graven on this height, a mystery—
A cataclysmic wonder then as now,
Yet temporal as earth or flower or tree—
All elements concealed beneath its brow
With protoplasmic dust of you and me.
But though this stone, primeval in its age,
Holds fast to secrets antedating time,
And stands enwrapt in wisdom like a sage,
Yet, older far-eternal and sublime—
The rock still stands on which all worlds began:
Love, gem-encrusted in the soul of man.

Amabel King

PRETTY POLL PARROT

Pretty Poll Parrot,
  Perched in her cage,
Preened all her feathers
  And talked like a sage;

Looked out the window,
  Spied Jenny Wren,
Bade her good-morrow,
  At quarter-to-ten.

"Poor little Jenny,
  Chirping", said she.
"Don't you wish you could
  Chatter like me?

Poor little Jenny,
  Only a wren,
Never to talk in
  Language of men."

Pretty Poll Parrot,
  Perched in her cage,
Preened all her feathers
  And talked like a sage;

Looked out the window,
  Spied Jenny Wren
Busily nesting
  At quarter-to-ten.

Proud, foolish Polly,
  Bow your green crest;
Envy sweet Jenny,
  Building her nest.

Thomas Saunders

CANADIAN POETRY REVIEWS

The Tree of Resurrection, and Other Poems. By Audrey Alexandra Brown. Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1937, $2.50. (This volume contains six long poems from an earlier book, and a collection of new poems.)

As you turn the leaves of this book idly, you suddenly stop with a jolt:

Death to Penelophon

Come away, come away, beggar maid; gown you again
In the russet-red garment that kept you once from the rain;
Put off your shoes, steal out through the faint-flushed clover—
Day has been long, too long; but day is over.

Come away, come away, beggar maid; bitter fruit
Darkens the aloe; hushed is the trembling lute;
Under your eaves the wings of the world are nested—
Come out in the silver dusk, O silver-breasted.

You turn the pages, and are arrested by this:

White Bride

Danny O'Shea went down the mine in the mornin'—
We told him not, but we couldn't keep him away—
For he never was one to listen to word or warnin'—
He was always a lad of his will, was Danny O'Shea.

His mother had dreamed three times that she heard him callin',
An' his hair was wet, an' his forehead cold as the clay—
An' "Mother" he cried to her, an' the dark was fallin'—
O but he laughed at it all, Danny O'Shea.

You wonder if the illusion is sustained, and you find, haphazardly:

I never had a garden. All my flowers
Are of dim amber and dream-amethyst
And twilight-rose—rainbows and stars and mist—
Too delicately fair for sun or showers,
Too frail for any wind to breathe upon:
But they will blossom still when June is gone.

This woman writes distinguished verse, you say to yourself: who is she? And you turn to what the publishers have to say on the jacket of the book. Hmmm! The usual hyperbolical encomiums. But are they?

THE HALCYON

There was a morning once when earth was new,
When the clear wave but twice or thrice had rolled
Waters as sweet as honey, fresh as dew,
On sands of ringing gold;
When the bright sea was young that now is old. . . .

In such a day the little new-made Eve
Saw her reflection like a miracle,
And lingered breathless, doubtful to believe,
And kissed the limpid pool,
Laughing to see herself so beautiful.

And again:

The leaves are falling too soon, the leaves are falling:
The birds wheel out and turn them south and away;
All air's wild with their voices crying and calling
Into the clear day.

Now the strong gipsies of the unhedged spaces
Tossed thick with combat of the clouds or bright
With falling flame of the sunset of far places
Take to the night.

Every page is as good; the longer poems are sustained, like Keats', and the shorter ones are exquisite:

Soul, do you hear the trumpets down the valley,
Where the lost battle waits for your broken sword?
The ranks are forming again for the last rally,
The spears are set in array beside the ford;
It's dark at the foot of the hill, or you'd see them lying—
The piteous wreck of the mingled dead and dying.

Soul, will you answer the silver horns' sounding?
Will you fling your life with the spent lives, the cost
Of a wild night and a mad day of wounding?
The quarrel was none of yours, and the battle's lost:
There's nothing to gain but the barren gain and splendid
Of a blow for the weaponless, struck ere the fight's ended.

We bow, ladies and gentlemen, to Audrey Alexandra Brown. Would we had met her sooner! For most of us, others abide our question: she is free. We introduce you to these beautiful verses, certain of the immortal glory that will be theirs.

J. Markowitz

The Legend of Ghost Lagoon. By Joseph Schull. Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1937, $2.50.

The reader who attempts to assign each book that comes under his notice to a *genre* will be somewhat puzzled by Mr. Schull's opusculum. *The Ancient Mariner,* Joseph Moncure March's *Wild Party,* our own E. J. Pratt's *Witches' Brew,* may come to mind, but the eventual conclusion will probably be that the *Legend of Ghost Lagoon* is *sui generis* with chest whiskers.

The legend is a chronicle in verse "of the Deeds of Solomon Sleavy, greatest and most terrible of the Buccaneers, and Commander of the infamous *Lady Kate*". Commander Sleavy was, in his day, the terror of the Spanish Main; he operated under certain strange Letters of Marque, as it were, which had been drawn up by the nether authorities represented by Davy Jones. It was provided in this document that each prisoner, before walking the plank, was to have a last encouraging draught of wine from a cup once owned by the pirate Morgan. But the lips of no member of the crew of the *Lady Kate* were ever to touch the chalice, or else. . . .

The crew themselves, as Mr. Schull reasonably suggests, were hardly the sort of boys "you'd want to be where the minister might drop in for tea". The mate, Pious Dick, was a former clergyman whose subsequent behaviour could scarcely be looked upon as a proper example for pious young men about to assume the cloth. Nor could the rest of the crew be accurately regarded as Tuxis Boys. Yet in spite of this, once one allows for the somewhat grim standards of pirate yarns, there is little that the most genteel reader would find offensive.

Even an admonition that, in these times, one finds only slightly impolite, is filled out with chaste dashes.

There is, however, plenty of roaring action in the legend as Mr. Schull tells it. A Spanish ship, the *Donna Maria,* is thunderously captured and looted, and its hapless personnel made to walk the plank. But while this is being done, Captain Sleavy breaks the terms of his agreement with the Old Red Boy, and then the story goes back to tell how such a compact came to be made. The *Lady Kate* had once been supernaturally becalmed. Release came after Pious Dick, the mate, had been taken by Davy Jones on a picturesque tour of the watery underworld. When he returned to the ship, he bore the conditions of the pact, and once these were agreed upon, the *Lady Kate* was released. Finally the curse which followed upon the violation of the agreement is worked out.

At its best, the verse in which the story is told moves rapidly, and with a certain Homeric vigour in the battle-scenes. There are, in addition, certain passages of marked descriptive beauty, particularly one—"The Pageant of the Damned"—in trochaics. There is no doubt that Mr. Schull can be an imaginative and sensitive performer on parts of speech when he wishes. But, on the other hand, there are times when the verse becomes a little monotonous, and the reader may feel unpleasantly aware of initial prepositions and genitives carried over from preceding lines.

Mr. Schull's Muse is a versatile lady, a little unconventional, perhaps, but one who manages to effect the somewhat rare combination of a genuine poetic faculty with a sense of humour. *The Legend of Ghost Lagoon* is, in this reader's opinion, nicely adapted to recitation on occasions when the boys drop around to appreciate a little literature accompanied by suitable potations, but it can safely be urged upon any amateur of good verse and of good stories, particularly stories a little on the "tall" side.

Norman J. DeWitt

Frozen Fire. By Floris Clark McLaren. Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1937, $1.50.

Mrs. McLaren is a British Columbian writer whose poems hitherto have appeared only in periodicals and chapbooks. Their presentation now in a slim volume reveals the author as possessing a selective taste for material and a distinctive style of treatment. She has chosen the Far North as her territory and brought to it not the traditional Service technique of swinging dactyls and anapests, giving the reader no time to breathe, but a quiet, disciplined, yet forceful manner which advertises the subject rather than the writer. The landscapes are vividly etched and the pulsing activities of life are described with an observant eye—the black armies of the spruces, the cries of the huskies, the roll of glacier-polished stones, the flicker of the green aurora on the snow, the half-breeds, "the bucks with chewing gum and scarlet neckties". Space allows but one short poem:

South Flight

Low grey sky and a pattern of wild geese flying,
And you'll stop with twisted heart to watch their flight;
Still standing, after the long wedge streams from sight,
Straining your ears for the last thin sound of their crying.

There'll be snow by morning, and cold wind-fingers prying
At chink and crevice, so fasten the windows tight,
And bring fresh wood for the fire, but in the night
You'll wake with a sob, remembering that distant crying,
Low grey sky and a pattern of wild geese flying.

The Gold of Dawn. By Dorothy Sproule. New York, Henry Harrison, 1938, $2.25.

Mrs. Dorothy Sproule, of Montreal, has built up quite a reputation for herself by the publication of several volumes of verse and by her frequent appearance in Canadian newspapers. Her poetry is the expression of a kind and winsome personality which practises and preaches the Christian virtues. The title

of the volume is significant, and the titles of the individual poems are variations of a central theme—"Love and Law", "Love's Alchemy", "The Star of Hope", "A Prayer for Peace", "Beyond the Clouds", "The Best Is Yet to Be". Any person is to be congratulated who today can hear the celestial harps accompanying the zoom of bombers and the caterpillar traction of tanks, and who can find assurance in "the love that casts out fear". Robert Browning's faith is perpetuated here:

> If we would see the whole of the great plan
> Instead of one small life, portrayed by man:
> The struggle to obtain perfection's height
> Would end in faith, in the Eternal Light.
>
> We do not make the law. It is. Since time
> Began the march of all the worlds sublime,
> And far above our knowledge so obscure
> Is God's omniscient love—so true—so pure.

Legendary Lyrics. By GEORGE KINGSTON. Picton, Ont., The Press of the Picton Gazette, 1938, $1.50.

THIS collection celebrates the important names, personal and geographical, in Canadian history—Champlain, Simcoe, Toronto, Quinte, Sir Robert Borden, Moose River, and numerous others. The author has chosen for his characteristic verse-vehicle an approximation to the Hiawatha measure.

NEWS NOTES OF CONTRIBUTORS

Although it is our custom to refer on this page to contributors who are new to the *Canadian Poetry Magazine,* it is a pleasure to announce another poem from Miss Ethelwyn Wetherald. She is one of the few poets remaining with us, who were writing in the 'eighties and 'nineties. Her first book, *The House of Trees,* was published in 1895, and in 1921 she brought out a book of verse for children, *Tree Top Morning.* She lives at "The Tall Evergreens", Fenwick, Ont., and is very much loved by those who know her personally and by those who are acquainted with her only through her verse.

L. A. MacKay, Professor of Classics in the University of Toronto, appears here for the first time under his own name. Hitherto, he has been "John Smalacombe" contributing to this and other magazines satires of the virile, smashing variety.

Dorothy Sproule is the well-known writer of Montreal. Her latest volume, *The Gold of Dawn,* is reviewed in this issue.

Thomas A. Saunders and Marie L. McPhillips belong to Winnipeg. Ada M. Strachan and Helen Fairbairn are of Toronto.

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SACKCLOTH FOR BANNER Probably $2.00

By JEAN-CHARLES HARVEY

Translated by Lukin Barette.

This book is the novelization of the experiences of a young French-Canadian, born and growing up in the hinterland of Quebec, and of his physical, emotional and intellectual struggles as he comes into manhood and seeks to find not only his own place in the world, but at the same time to bring his fellow provincials with him.

MACMILLAN